



NOELA Community Health Center

January 20, 2017

Governor John Bel Edwards
Office of the Governor
PO Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

RE: Lance Harris Budget Plan, Devastating Impact to Health Outcomes

Dear Governor:

In the recent media coverage of a plan released by State Representative Lance Harris to make current fiscal year cuts in the amount of over \$300 million; we as health centers and citizens are concerned about the impact to healthcare delivery that will be caused by his proposed cuts.

Under Harris' plan, it has been reported that The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) would be cut by \$147,156,472. This cut would defund all of the public-private partnerships and eliminate waiver programs, among other critical health care programs – all with only 4 months left in the fiscal year to implement the cuts. In addition, the LDH has calculated that the cuts would cause a loss of matching federal funds, impacting the total fiscal cuts to LDH at \$423,000,000.

I am writing to you as a leader at one of Louisiana's Federally Qualified Health Centers. We do not receive a state allocation in the budget and are extremely proud to help you lead the charge to expand Medicaid in Louisiana; a move that saved our state money this year and will continue to have exponential returns. Our patients' overall health outcomes will be impacted severely if these cuts move forward. If our patients lose access to area hospitals because public private partnerships dissolve, if our patients with disabilities lose lifesaving waiver services that allow their families to remain productive members of our communities, and if other so-called "discretionary" health care program are cut, we will be exacerbating the health outcomes of our communities, where we are supposed to be charged with improving community health and wellness.

Therefore, with a true appreciation for just how tough the current state budget situation is, I write today to tell you that we as a community health center, we do not support the cuts

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proposed in the Harris plan and stand with you to seek solution-driven ideas for balancing our budget that value the lives and well-being of our patients.

Sincerely,

Diem Nguyen, CEO
NOELA Community Health Center
13085 Chef Menteur Hwy.
New Orleans, LA 70129



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